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THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Outline of a Discourse delivered in the Baptist Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne, on Lord's-day evening, April 12, 1863.

By William Stokes, Manchester.

"But can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Matt. xvi. 3.

These words form part of a severe rebuke administered by the Saviour to the vain and proud Pharisees and Sadducees, who sought of him a sign from heaven. Not content with the evidence he gave in his doctrine, benevolence, and miracles, of the Divinity of his mission, they dared to "tempt" the Lord of life and glory, by asking a sign to demonstrate his claim, which they presumptuously implied would be defective, without some such proof of his Divine pretensions. So far from gratifying their vanity, or idle curiosity, he turns their folly back upon themselves in the stern rebuke of this address, "Ye can discern the face of the sky,"—ye can anticipate the weather of the day and the night,—ye can understand the paltry concerns of this life, but can ye not understand the more comprehensive concerns of the kingdom of God?—"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

Apart, however, from the immediate occasion that gave birth to this severe rebuke, the words contain a principle of the greatest importance, which is, that "the signs of the times" indicate events connected with the kingdom of God, and that it is a part of Christian wisdom to study the signs of the times in order to adapt our individual and united activity to the demands which these "signs" obviously make on our faith and obedience. Viewing the words in this light, we proceed to consider,

I. *The nature of the signs of the present times.*

1. *In the professing church.* These signs are varied and diverse, some good, but others doubtful. *First. Some that are good*, betokening health,—and warranting the expectation of prosperity. Among these may be classed an amount of activity at home, in Sunday-school labour, and preaching the gospel throughout the length and breadth of the land, in town and country, in city and in hamlet, such as Britain never knew before. To this must be added the wide extent of missionary zeal, which, spreading throughout all Christian society, and entering nearly every church, is rapidly moulding the country at large into one mighty agency for the extension of the religion of the cross among all mankind. Nor should we overlook the hope-

ful "sign" in the regularity of the practice of public prayer, which in the form of "prayer-meetings," keeps alive that most healthy conviction that without the Divine blessing all we do will be done in vain. These "signs of the times" are good and should be accepted as tokens of a more hopeful and a more fruitful future.

Second. But there are *some that are doubtful.* And first among these and one of most ruinous import is the *wide-spread indifference to sound doctrine and primitive communion.* This, as a "sign of the times," is fraught with both alarm and danger, inasmuch as final usefulness springs much more from the doctrine taught and believed, than from the amount of activity displayed. True usefulness depends upon the cause which is undertaken, and not upon mere bustle and agitation; and what is effectually *done* for the church of God will be determined by what is *believed.* And it is a doubtful, if not a dark sign of the times, that *sound doctrine* is not popular in the professing world. The total depravity of man, the atonement of Christ, his imputed righteousness, the sovereign love and special grace of God, the Trinity of the Godhead, the final perseverance of the saints, and kindred truths, are neither sought after nor prized by the vast majority of the hearers of the gospel. The *early communion* of the Christian church is equally neglected, if not sternly opposed. A vague and spurious charity has, to a fearful extent, set aside the law of Christ to his own household, while a gratuitous benevolence opens the table of the Redeemer to numbers who are known to be indifferent to the great law, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "Whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer," was the unalterable rule of the old law; but in modern times the authority of one greater than Moses is perverted to encourage the entrance of an unsubmissive world with untold blemishes into the church of God. Obedience to Christ is thus rapidly disappearing from among us as the sole test of character, and the only condition of membership among his people. This departure from primitive doctrine and fellowship is accompanied with another dangerous sign of the times in *the neglect of experimental religion.* A cold intellectualism threatens to supersede the warm feelings of a devoted soul; and even now among large, and we fear increasing numbers, far more honour is awarded to a religion that dwells in the head, than to the priceless one that exists in the experience of the heart. Then again, *the conformity of the church to the world,* is another ominous sign of the times. It is fraught with mischief and directly subversive of Christian simplicity, that the church is as fashionable as the world itself. There one may see all the folly and foppery of the outside adorning of the body, both in men and women, and not unfrequently the "latest Paris fashions" are first displayed in the sanctuary of the great God. The wise medium of avoiding the extremes of meanness on the one side, and empty show upon the other, is but faintly enforced or practised in the church; and the consequence is, that instead of placing the church in the world to check its evils with "the salt of the earth," it is far too true that we place the world in the church to supply it with vanity. With but slight exceptions, the Redeemer could not say of modern professors, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Then there is the wide extent of *formality in prayer,* standing out before us as another dark sign of the times. The system of "prayer-meetings" is an admirable one, but if the spirit of prayer be absent, they become delusive and injurious. And it is almost alarming that there is so much prayer, but so little *earnestness, faith* and *power.* Yet what is prayer, and what are prayer-meetings without these? Will mere words avail with God? Will the outward act succeed without the earnest faith of the inward spirit? Yet in how few cases do we meet with the spirit of the true Israelite, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!" How seldom do we witness or offer prayers that carry on their open front *that we mean what we say,* —that we are in thorough earnest, and are determined to succeed. The absence of this spirit is among the darkest "signs of the times," and unless there is a speedy reformation, the sentence will be pronounced upon the modern, as it was pronounced upon the ancient church, "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Nor is it a less fearful sign of the times that the *religious training of children at home,* has nearly departed from the land. The healthy practice of the Puritans and the Covenanters of *catechising* their youth, grounding them in the knowledge of the

Scriptures, and subjecting them to a weekly personal examination in the things of God, is rapidly disappearing from the modern church. How few are the families where the children are regularly questioned on the affairs of the soul; and among the poor, how few parents take charge of the religious training of their own children! This great duty of the household is discharged by proxy, and one of the first obligations of the parent is systematically handed over to society, to be acknowledged by strangers, because there is no proper effort made to acknowledge it at home. This invasion or perversion of the family compact is a foreboding sign of the times to the *Christian* civilization of all Europe. And last, but not the least, of these dark signs is, *the extensive and growing neglect of the work of the Holy Spirit.* He, the Spirit of truth, is also the Spirit of life to the whole church of God, nor is it possible that there can be either truth or life in Divine things where he is not. All Sabbaths, sermons, and services, are nothing without him. Even the gospel, though preached with a truthful fidelity, will be as water spilt upon the ground, if his gracious blessing be absent; and the ordinances themselves, notwithstanding their Divine appointment, will be powerless, apart from his grace, to convert them into blessings. The whole gospel dispensation is the "dispensation of the Spirit," and unless he be honoured as its all in all, it will prove but as a body without the soul to give it life and activity. The risen and glorified Redeemer has passed over his own work to the Holy Spirit; and he, acting for the absent Saviour, alone applies that work to the calling, regeneration, adoption, and sanctification of all the elect children of God. Hence the fearful character of the sign, where He is neglected,—where men can preach, or hear, or pray, without *direct* dependance on his grace. This is to expect life in the body when there is no breath; and motion in the machinery without fire to produce the steam. On every enterprize connected with the kingdom of God there may be seen written in living characters the everlasting truth, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Yet notwithstanding this unquestionable fact, there is more practical dependance on eloquence, learning, and even money, than upon the Spirit of the living God. Of all the dark signs of the times, this is the darkest, and the most fatal to the solid interests of the church of God.

2. *The signs of the times as they appear in the world at large.*

First. The rapid extension of knowledge is a very marked characteristic of the present age. The world is all agitation. The quiet contentment with home and local pursuits, has for ever passed away; and many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased. The press teems with intelligence, and there is scarcely a day but some swift-winged messenger of the waters bears it away in weighty bales to some distant shore. The word of God in a hundred different tongues, and volumes or tracts that support its claims or explain its meaning, are scattered among all lands, and are rapidly moulding the opinions of mankind in every distant nation.

Second. The rapidly increasing intercourse among the nations of the world is a sign too significant to be overlooked. They are better acquainted with each other at the present moment than ever they were in any past age; and instead of regarding one another as of different races, and almost as of different species, they are beginning to discover that man is man of whatever colour, clime, or language.

Third. The mutual dependance of nation upon nation. The law of the great enemy of man has been, "Divide, and conquer;" but the diviner law is "Unite, and be blest." This purer law the nations are slowly recognizing, but to the full degree of its recognition they will contribute to each other's happiness, while each in an equal degree promotes its own. A false view of self interest has too long kept them asunder, but a truer self interest is drawing them together as with the cords of love. Among the signs of the times, this is one of the most healthy and hopeful; for just as the nations unite in friendly relations, so far they become open to persuasion and truth, and in the same proportion they fall in with the merciful design of heaven, in the final union of mankind.

Fourth. The existence, and, to some extent, the increase of a warlike rivalry, is a characteristic sign of the times, and one that in all probability portends danger to the nations. The incessant ambition to be greater than others, to command more

power, and to exert a more weighty influence among the counsels of the world by the ability to wield a larger amount of blind brute force, is a despicable passion, and unworthy of rational and immortal man. It spreads the elements of danger all over the earth, and covers both the land and the ocean with the instruments of death. As it would increase danger, rather than secure safety, to accumulate gunpowder in a number of private dwellings; equally so a warlike rivalry makes peace more uncertain, and deadly strife more probable and easy. It is a dark sign of the times that in the nineteenth century the instruments of death are more powerful than the world ever knew in any former age.

Fifth. The strong tendencies that exist towards a literary and theological Rationalism, constitute another formidable sign of the times. Not that in this disguised infidelity there is anything either new or weighty; but the alarming aspect of this sign consists in the readiness with which numbers of certain religionists, as well as others, grasp at the faintest shadows of scepticism, and the glee they exhibit if for a moment they can confuse some illogical defender of the truth, by a sophism that passes for an argument. It is not in anything that modern Rationalism has attempted or threatened, that the danger of this sign is found, but in that latent, wide-spread desire that the truth of Holy Scripture may be disproved, and in the positive delight that it would impart to these thousands should it be demonstrated that Moses is not to be believed, and that in the failure of Moses there would be involved the failure of Christ, *and all true religion*. Here lies the danger, in the prompt and delighted response which these multitudes would yield to the call of the empiric, who should inscribe upon his banner the ripened sentiment of all Rationalistic teaching, "There is no God." That among large numbers in Continental Europe, with increasing changelings at home, there should be ecstatic delight at the bare thought of escaping from the claims of all that bears the name of religion, is a dark and ominous sign of the times.

Sixth. The indifference, if not hostility, to a thoroughly strict, personal, and experimental religion, may be considered as another unfavourable sign of the times. To "deny the world, and all ungodliness and worldly lust" is an unpopular requirement, and he who shall strictly acknowledge the obligation, will not fail to draw down upon himself the censure of numbers in even *Christian society*. The popular faith is not favourable to an *inward* religion; for to mourn over sin is to be "melancholy," and to wrestle for personal pardon is regarded as superstition. The fervent prayers, the arduous religious exercises, the heavenly mindedness, and spirituality, that characterized the Reformers and Puritans, are now almost unknown, unsought, and unloved; and that the comparative few who cherish and pursue them should be marked as "righteous over much," is among the unhealthy signs of the times.

Having glanced at these more obvious "signs" as they appear both in the church and the world, we now proceed to consider,

II. *The probable significance of the signs of these our times.*

(To be concluded in the next.)

THE JOYFUL SOUND.

BY B. TAYLOR, DICKLEBURGH.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance:"—PSA. lxxxix. 15.

THE foregoing verses may be considered a song of praise to God as touching his power. His power is great in the heavens, and in the earth, and in the sea. His power is great in Providence, in ruling over all, in providing for all, and in upholding all. His power is great in the overthrow of his enemies, great in defending the saints, and gloriously great in giving them all victories. God's power is great in his word, great in beginning the good work in his people, great in

carrying it on, and great in crowning that work with eternal glory. Now, none can so well understand these things as the person spoken of in my text. Let us consider the text in three particulars:—1st. The joyful sound. 2nd. The blessedness of such as know it. 3rd. The promise here made to them.

I. *The joyful sound.* But here is a people spoken of who are concerned in this joyful sound, and who are they? They are spoken of in God's word as an *elected* people, a *chosen* people, a *called* people, and a *token* people. In Exod. vi. 7, it says, "I will take you to me for a people, and be to you a God." In Deut. vii. 6, Moses says, "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people." Now this people shall be known not only by what they can say for God in a way of experience, but by what they can do for God in a way of practice. They shall not only feel God's grace in their hearts and affections, but they shall show forth his praise in their life, walk, and conversation. The words of Peter are a proof of what I say: "Ye are a chosen generation," &c., 1 Pet. ii. 9. But let us now consider this joyful sound. What is it? For an explanation, let me direct you to Luke ii. 10, 11: "And the angel said, Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people," &c. What is this joyful sound? Let me refer you to 1 Tim. i. 15: "This is a faithful saying," &c. This joyful sound existed throughout the whole of the Old Testament dispensation. Upon the hem of the High Priests' garments there were bells and pomegranates. Now, when he went into the holy place these bells made a noise, they gave out a sound, and this sound was to be always heard lest the High Priest perish. O ye priests of God, let the sound of Christ's righteousness be heard when ye go before God, for ye must perish without it. Let the sound of his death be heard. Let the sound of all that he has done be heard, and go before God with nothing else, and you shall never perish. It was a joyful sound when the jubilee trumpet was blown; God commanded it to be sounded on the day of atonement: see Lev. xxv. 9. They were not only to sound the trumpet, but according to the margin of our Bibles, they were to sound it loud, "Ye shall proclaim liberty through all the land." A most blessed sound this was to those who were in certain circumstances, and which served to make it such a welcome sound, I mean such as were in bondage and distress. To these it is a gladly solemn sound as the poet says,—

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow,
The gladly solemn sound
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bounds:
The year of Jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

How joyful the sound of the gospel is to them that are shut up in a prison of bondage and unbelief, and have been longing for days, months, and years, to get out! It is a joyful sound to all debtors, all bankrupts. The gospel is not only a sound affording the strongest consolation, but it is a sound that does wonderful execution.

See this in Joshua vi. 5: "When ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the walls of the city of Jericho shall fall down flat." This sound levels mountains and hills. It overthrows stone walls, of sin, of doubts and fears, and unbelief. It will throw down the walls of the world, the flesh and the devil. What a mighty difference there is between the law sound and the gospel sound! According to Exod. xix., the sound of the law made the people afraid, and caused them to tremble; whereas the sound of the gospel causes them to rejoice and to leap for joy. Every child of God knows the distinction between these two sounds: he dreads the one, and heartily welcomes the other.

II. *The blessedness of such as know this sound,* and that briefly. Are you in bondage? Then God has blessed you in sending to you the gospel sound of liberty. Mind the gospel is no sound of liberty to those who indulge in sin, but to those only who are sensibly in bondage because of sin. Do you feel that you are deeply in debt? God has blessed you in sending to you the sound of all your debts being paid. Are you extremely poor? The Jubilee trumpet sound concerned none so much as these. They were to be released from their servile state under

the law. God has greatly blessed you in taking off the yoke of sin, and setting you free from the power sin. We can see the blessedness of God's people only as they are made to feel themselves fit subjects for this joyful sound, that is, they must be in the very circumstances which this sound imports. Are they poor in spirit? They are blessed; for the gospel sound is to them full of power and vitality. Are they mourners? We are sure they are blessed by the Lord, for the sound of the gospel is to them both comforting and refreshing. Are they hungry and thirsty? They are the blessed of the Lord; for "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

III. *To consider the promise made to the people here spoken of.* "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." The words seem to imply that they are now walking in darkness, are full of fears, terror, and confusion. If so, how sweet the promise, "they shall walk in the light of thy countenance." We learn from these words that God's people, however much they may long and desire to walk in the light, they are not able to do so till the Lord is pleased to lead them into the light. They would, but cannot; nevertheless, the text says, "they shall." They shall walk before God in delightful views of the doctrines of grace, in satisfactory evidences of their interest in Christ, and in claiming the promises as their own. They shall walk before God in the enjoyment of the ordinances of his house. They shall walk before God in holding holy communion with one another. To conclude: they shall walk before God in the full blaze of his countenance in the promised land above when there will be no mists, no fogs, no clouds, nor the least thing to disturb their peace or mar their happiness. Glory be to God for this precious truth: "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

GOD'S PRESENCE INDISPENSABLE.

Leaves from my Note Book.

BY A YORKSHIRE PREACHER.

(No. 18.)

"And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence:"—EXOD. xxxiii. 15.

AFTER the people of Israel had been plagued for worshipping the golden calf, Moses was commanded by the Lord to go up with them to the promised land, with the assurance that an angel should go before them to drive out their foes: but, said the Lord, "I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way." By this promise and wrathful declaration it seems evident that the revealed purpose of the Lord was to send an ordinary, or created, angel with the rebellious people rather than give them his own special presence in the person of the angel of whom he had said in the former part of this book: "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, and provoke him not; *for he will not pardon your transgressions for, my name is in him.*" The promise of the presence of an ordinary angel did not, however, satisfy Moses: no angel would content him but the "angel of the covenant," the "messenger of the Lord of hosts," the angel who hitherto had "gone before them by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and night." In language most earnest he pleads with the Lord to reverse his decision, and go up himself with "the nation that was his own people." The plea prevails; the Lord at once graciously gives the promise, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses, satisfied, replies, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."

What Moses wanted, then, was God's special presence manifested through the person of Christ; and without it, the great prophet felt that even he dared not

venture to go up to Canaan's happy land. What mattered it to him that the land flowed with milk and honey, that it abounded with corn and wine, and oil, and pomegranates; that it was a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, and of hills and valleys, drinking water of the rain of heaven, all would not do without the sweet presence of God. If he was to be absent, it would have been better for the people to have remained slaves in Egypt, to have been drowned in the waters of the Red Sea, to have perished through hunger and thirst in the wilderness, or to have been irrecoverably defeated in their first battle with Amalek in Rephidim. Without the special presence of God in Christ, the journey to Canaan would be of all journeys the most toilsome; and should the land itself be reached at last, even then, if the shining face of the Holy One of Israel were not displayed, it would but prove a second Egypt, or as described by Job, "a land of darkness as darkness itself: and of the shadows of death without any order; and where the light is as darkness." Then Moses pleads with God: "Go thou up with us:" let us have Thee in the wilderness to watch over us, guard us, supply our wants, instruct us, lead us, keep us, quell our fears, destroy our foes, and give us daily comfort; go with us, to help us to cross the Jordan, to take possession of the good land, to overcome the Canaanites, settle in our borders, build thy house and serve thee in thy own appointed way: go up with us, and abide with us until our wanderings are over, our last battle has been fought, our last enemy is subdued, and till in the death-struggle we are enabled, through thine all-supporting grace, to give our final testimony that "not one good thing hath failed of all that thou hast promised." This is the true meaning of the words of the intercessory prophet. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."

Thus may all those plead with God, who are sent to preach his word, or to take the oversight of any of the Lord's people. What is wanted in the preaching of the word is, Christ's presence. No substitute can be found for it. Intellectual ability, academical learning, and oratorical power, will not supply its place. In vain shall the preacher display his various arts: in vain shall he give the studied discourse: in vain shall he pour out the earnestness of his spirit without the presence of Christ. Plead, then, thou who art sent of God to preach, for the presence of thy Master. Cry mightily to him, that his presence may be with thee, in thy study, in thy pulpit, and in thy cottage. Never be satisfied with the discourse, address, or attempted effort to do good, that hath not been crowned with his smile. Get thy message *from* him, take thy message *to* him, and then deliver thy message *through* him: and days that are yet to come shall show that thou hast not wrought in vain *for* him. To go to the Lord earnestly, telling him that without his presence thou canst not preach, and dost not even desire to preach, is the only true way to learn how to preach. But in the ministry, changes will sometimes occur. We may be called for the first time to take charge of a people, or be called upon to remove from one sphere of labour to another. To one sent of God to preach, this may prove a great trial. Often will these questions be put, Am I in the path of duty? Should I take a step in this direction? Is this call a call from God? Will the people who have chosen me, profit by my ministrations? What, if after all, I should be deceived? Are you here? Then stir not a step until you have put up the plea of Moses, and have the recorded answer in your own soul. If Christ go up with you, if he has put it into the hearts of the people to give you the call, if he abides both with you and them when you settle among them, then a work shall be done which shall both shame your adversaries, and increase Christ's kingdom in the earth. If Christ, however, is not consulted, and you are left to follow your own wilful way without his presence, then look for opposition, and perplexities, innumerable. It is true that these things may come in the path of duty, but then the presence of Christ shall make the burden light: it is when you shall meet with them out of the path of duty that the burden shall be well nigh intolerable. It is no light thing to undertake the charge of a church and congregation, to be called upon to preach the gospel to them from day to day, to give a word in season to those who need it,—to feed the saint, and warn, and direct the sinner,—to declare the whole counsel of God affectionately and faithfully; and so be pure from

the blood of all men,—to visit the sick chamber and point the dying one to the blood of Jesus, in short, to take your stand ever in the foreground, as one appointed by Jehovah to lead the way to Canaan's glory. As the work, then, is so heavy, cry unto God, "If thy presence go not with me, carry me not up hence."

So may the Lord's people ever plead with him in their passage through this world to the heavenly land. Subject to change of place and circumstance, and not knowing at times the way in which they should go, it is necessary that they should be guided aright by their Saviour. Christian, art thou about to remove? Then seek for the enjoyment of God's presence on thy removal. Art thou about to enter on some new undertaking? Examine, and see if the undertaking be consistent with thy Christian character, and then ask thy God to go before thee. Art thou called upon to execute some work for thy Master? Enter not upon it in thy own strength, but seek for help from on high. Art thou called upon to face worldly cares, family trials, church difficulties, or death's Jordan, still seek the cheering visits of thy Redeemer, and safely through all shalt thou be brought. Wherever Jesus leads, whether through the waters or the flames, thou shalt be able to say, "He hath led me forth by the right way that I might go to a city of habitation." "No step without the presence of Jesus," is a good motto for thee, from the commencement of the Christian journey until its close.

If we are Christians indeed, to be near to Jesus, and have Jesus near to us, will be our daily prayer. We shall cry,—

> "Grant us the visits of thy face,
> And we desire no more."

Realizing God's presence, we shall feel that the Lord goeth up before us, to clear our way,—that he will be our rearward,—that he is round about us a wall of fire to save us from every prowling foe, and that he will never cease to watch over us for good, until we see his beauteous face and enjoy his company in heaven. Reader, if thou art a mere formal professor, thou wilt know nothing about God's presence, and, therefore, thou wilt rest satisfied without it. If thou art a quickened sinner, thou wilt long to enjoy it. If thou art an experienced Christian, thy song will be in times of joy and sorrow :—

> "Thy shining grace can cheer
> The dungeon where I dwell;
> 'Tis paradise when thou art here;
> If thou depart, 'tis hell."

The hypocrite shall not have God's presence, for he does not want it; the seeking sinner shall enjoy it yet to the satisfaction of his soul; and the tried Christian whose conversation is ordered aright, shall enjoy that presence through all time and for evermore.

THE JEWS.

FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

"And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth unto the other; .....and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind."—DEUT. xxviii. 64, 65.

THE church of Rome ever ranked and treated them as heretics. The canons of different councils pronounced excommunication against those who should favour or uphold the Jews against Christians; enjoined all Christians neither to eat nor to hold any commerce with them; prohibited them from bearing public offices or having Christian slaves; appointed them to be distinguished by a mark; decreed that their children should be taken from them, and brought up in monasteries;

and what is equally descriptive of the low estimation in which they were held, and of the miseries to which they were subjected, there was often a necessity, even for those who otherwise oppressed them, to ordain that it was not lawful to take the life of a Jew without any cause. Hallam's account of the Jews, during the middle ages, is short, but significant: "They were everywhere the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre. A time of festivity to others was often the season of mockery and persecution to them. It was the custom at Thoulouse, to smite them on the face every Easter. At Beziers they were attacked with stones, from Palm-Sunday to Easter, an anniversary of insult and cruelty generally productive of bloodshed, and to which the populace were regularly instigated by a sermon from the bishop. It was the policy of the kings of France to employ them as a sponge to suck their subjects' money, which they might afterwards expend with less odium than direct taxation would incur. It is almost incredible to what a length extortion of money from the Jews was carried. A series of alternate persecution and tolerance was borne by this extraordinary people with an invincible perseverance, and a talent of accumulating riches, which kept pace with the exaction of their plunderers. Philip Augustus released all Christians in his dominions from their debts to the Jews, reserving a fifth part to himself. He afterwards expelled the whole nation from France. St. Louis twice banished, and twice recalled them; and Charles VI. finally expelled them from France. From that country, according to Mezeray, they were seven times banished. They were expelled from Spain; and, by the lowest computation, one hundred and seventy thousand families departed from that kingdom. "At Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spires, Worms, many thousands of them were pillaged and massacred. A remnant was saved by a feigned and transient conversion; but the greater part of them barricaded their houses, and precipitated themselves, their families, and their wealth, into the rivers or the flames. These massacres and depredations on the Jews were renewed at each crusade." In England, also, they suffered great cruelty and oppression at the same period. During the crusades, the whole nation united in the persecution of them. In a single instance, at York, fifteen hundred Jews, including women and children, were refused all quarter, could not purchase their lives at any price, and, frantic with despair, perished by a mutual slaughter. Each master was the murderer of his family, when death became their only deliverance. The scene of the castle of Massada, which was their last fortress in Palestine, and where nearly one thousand perished in a similar manner, was renewed in the castle of York. So despised and hated were they, that the barons, when contending with Henry III., to ingratiate themselves with the populace, ordered seven hundred Jews to be slaughtered at once, their houses to be plundered, and their synagogues to be burned. Richard, John, and Henry III. often extorted money from them; and the last, by the most unscrupulous and unsparing measures, usually defrayed his extraordinary expenses with their spoils, and impoverished some of the richest among them. His extortions at last became so enormous, and his oppression so grievous, that, in the words of the historian, he reduced the miserable wretches to desire leave to depart the kingdom; but even self-banishment was denied them. Edward I. completed their misery, seized on all their property, and banished them the kingdom. Above fifteen thousand Jews were rendered destitute of any residence, were despoiled to the utmost, and reduced to ruin. Nearly four centuries elapsed before the return to Britain of this abused race.*—*Keith.*

* It is a well known story of King John, that he confined a wealthy Jew in one of the royal castles, and daily caused one of his teeth to be torn out, until, when the jaw of the unhappy Israelite was half-disfurnished, he consented to pay a large sum, which it was the tyrant's object to extort from him.

A Page for the Young.

BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

(Continued).

1st BOOK of KINGS, from chap. i. to chap. xi. In chronological order, this portion of the book comes first under notice, for it contains a distinct period of history, and one, which taken in all its parts, is the most splendid in Old Testament times. It ranges over a period of 40 years, beginning 1015, and continuing to 975 before Christ, and gives a wonderfully interesting account of the wise, powerful, yet weak king, Solomon. It commences with his accession to the throne of David his father (chap. i.), David's solemn charge to him, and David's death (chap. ii. 1—11); Solomon's reign, to the completion of the temple (chap. ii.—vii), with the building of his own house. It then describes the solemn dedication of the temple, including Solomon's fine prayer (chap. viii.), God's great covenant with him, his foolish departure from God, and his death (chap. ix.—xi.) These are events and actions full of the deepest interest, and cannot be read in the spirit of prayer without imparting solid profit to every youthful reader.

The first thing to notice is the wonderful character of this great Monarch. The account given of him is not equalled in all history. "*And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore* [outspread, wide, expansive]. *And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men,—than Ethan, the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.*" chap. iv. 29—34. See also chap. x. 24, 25.

Every one must see that no *mere man* ever equalled king Solomon. His proverbs and his songs proved his wisdom and poetic gifts. His description of trees and plants showed his surprising acquaintance with the vegetable world; and his speaking of beasts, birds, creeping things, and fishes, his insight into the animal creation. But we have more to say of Solomon in our next.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN THE FEBRUARY NUMBER.

Belize, April 14, 1863.

DEAR SIR,—The seven miracles in connection with water, I think, are these: 1st. When the water was turned into blood by Moses and Aaron: Exod. vii. 20. 2nd. When the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea: Exod. xiv. 21, 22. 3rd. The bitter waters of Marah made sweet by Moses: Exod. xv. 23, 25. 4th. Water brought out of the rock in Horeb: Exod. xvii. 6. 5th. Water coming out of the rock in Kadesh: Num. xx. 7—11. 6th. Elisha healing the waters by casting in salt: 2 Kings ii. 19—22. 7th. Water turned into wine by Jesus: John ii. 1—11.

The three miracles in connection with the sun: 1st. The sun standing still: Josh. x. 12. 2nd. Returning ten degrees backward: 2 Kings xx. 8—11. 3rd. Darkened at the Crucifixion: Matt. xxvii. 45.

HEPHZIBAH GABOUREL.

P. S.—We thank this young friend, and Mary and Martha Marsh, (Accrington) *for their appropriate replies, and hope to give further extracts next month.*

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—To meet a want deeply felt among us, I have determined, by Divine assistance, to commence a course of lecture-lessons, in Hellenistic Greek; and if encouraged, in other branches of godly and useful learning, for the benefit of young men, connected especially with the Strict Baptist churches. As my abode was found at an inconvenient distance for the majority of young men attending my former classes, I hope to obtain accommodation in a central part of London, of which timely notice shall be given. My system of instruction, which has been tested, and proved a success, is based on the laws of language, and a logical analysis, and cannot fail, except from want of capacity or application. In the mean time, I shall be happy to hear from any candidates for instruction, and to afford all needful information. I am yours sincerely,

JAMES MULES, L. L. B.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

STRICT BAPTISTS IN IRELAND.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Medhurst says, "On referring to the Baptist Handbook for 1863," he finds "*twenty-eight* churches are named" and observes that "until your correspondent can prove of all the Baptist churches 'in Ireland' the major portion is open communion, his friendly epistle is valueless." But let me remind Mr. M., that as he asserts that, "most of the churches in Ireland are *strict*," his assertion without proof is equally valueless; and as he was the first to make an assertion on the subject, the burden of proof properly lies on him. I therefore ask him to point out those of the twenty-eight churches that he *knows* to be strict. This statistical information will be of some service at present, as it will enable the Strict Baptists to ascertain their strength in Ireland.

Mr. M. queries whether the churches in Belfast and Portadown be open; I presume they are so; and as "A Friend" has made the statement, I think they must be regarded as such until that statement be proved incorrect by Mr. Medhurst or some one else. Yours respectfully,

JAMES M'DONALD.

Drumkirk, Ballygrainey, Ireland, May 2, 1863.

THE BROKEN VOW.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Some years ago I asked a young man who was then a Covenanter "after the most straitest sect," to take part with me in a religious service. I received the following letter bearing date, "Newtounards, Jan. 4th, 1860," in reply:—

"REV. SIR,—Not wishing to stand in any way identified with the principles which you teach, I beg most respectfully to decline your kind invitation. I am, I confess, afraid of doing anything which might be construed into a favouring of your views either as regards doctrine or church government.

"Could I think for a moment that in these respects your views were sound, I should embrace them without a shade of hesitation, but while I believe them to be erroneous, I shall stand opposed to them in every position in which I may be placed; and in order to do so, the more consistently I am determined to stand aloof from connection with you as a Baptist teacher. In your private capacity I respect and love you as a Christian, and, I trust, I shall never do anything to prove the contrary; but in your public character as a Baptist minister I can never allow myself to countenance you in the smallest degree by associating with you and your people in religious worship, or by any other means calculated to create misapprehension.

"I am a Covenanter, as you well know, and have taken a vow against your views, and, consequently, feel in duty bound to maintain a standing of separation. I cannot countenance what I have vowed to be wrong.

"Where I in your meeting, I should express my views in a manner which

would not be likely to please your people, and by doing so, I am afraid I should render my services very unacceptable. My influence would not be so great as it might be where I am at present employed. My time is pretty much occupied in town, and I have large enough sphere of usefulness in it without going out to a place where part of my exhortations would be in vain.

"I trust you will see that I object to your views and not to yourself, and that while I decline your invitation I am actuated by prudence and conscience. I hope God will bless and prosper you in your way to Zion, the city of our God; but I trust your influence as a Baptist teacher may be overthrown and destroyed. You see I am candid, and do not wish to conceal my opinions and desires under a mask. Had I been less open-minded, I might have framed a more pleasing apology for declining your invitation; but I think candour and honesty will always be appreciated by the Christian and the gentleman. I am, Rev. Sir, most truly and respectfully yours,

"ROBERT RAMSEY."

You will be glad to learn that our young Covenanter has broken his vow. I had the pleasure of baptizing him some weeks ago, in the presence of a large congregation. Previous to the administration of the ordinance he gave his reasons for becoming a Baptist in a clear and telling address, which was listened to with much attention. He bears testimonials from several ministers of the covenanting church as a person of "unblemished moral character, earnest piety, evangelical sentiments, and vigorous intellect." He is the author of several publications both in prose and verse. Yours in Christian love,

JOHN BROWN.

Conlig Manse,
Newtounards, Ireland.
May 2, 1863.

Poetry.

LINES

Addressed to the Delegates who formed the "Strict Communion Baptist Society" at their Meeting in London, April 21, 1863.

BY WILLIAM STOKES, MANCHESTER.

Be bold and firm, ye men of God,
And tread the path your fathers trod;
They fear'd no scoff, or frowning foe,
But braved the stormy world below.

Be bold and strong in Christ your Friend,
And, faithful labour, "to the end;"
Heed not who sneers or turns aside,
For paltry gain or worldly pride.

So in the days that were of old,
An Achan curs'd the camp for gold:
So Judas for vile priestly pay,
Barter'd a Saviour's life away.

Oh, stand like men, be nobly strong,
And make the grace of Christ your song;
His faithful love and promise sure,
Will even to the end endure.

Go forward, then, and know no fear,
With Jesus your great Captain near;
Write on your banner, now unfurl'd,
"Our Christ has overcome the world."

A "holy calling" you have heard,
Maintain your Saviour in his word;
Nor let a loose and guilty shame,
Pervert that sweet and sacred name.

Yet be it our's to "walk in love,"
As heirs of endless life above;
And show to friend and foe around,
That we "the way of peace" have found.

Thus, blending truth with love Divine,
"Firmness" will all the brighter shine;
And while with "strictness" we obey,
That love will show "the better way."

A DEATH-BED CONFESSION.

It is reported of Nicholas, the late Czar of Russia, that almost the last words he spoke were these—"My life has been a great and long mistake. I thought to make my country flourish by teaching my people the arts of war: I ought to have taught them the arts of peace."

Intelligence.

AMERICA.

Official Letter from the Baptist Pastors' Conference of New York City, to the Strict Communion Baptist Society, meeting in London, April 21, 1863. Copied by permission from the Report of that Society, just published, price Twopence.*

New York, April 9, 1863.

The Baptist Pastors' Conference of New York City, to Mr. WILLIAM STOKES, *Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine, and Hon. Secretary to the Meeting of Strict Baptists in London.*

DEAR SIR,

Your letter to Dr. Gillette, of New York, with the accompanying circular, on the subject of open and strict communion, was read to the Baptist Pastors' Conference, at their regular meeting, April 6, in the city of New York; and as this Conference sympathize in the objects of your proposed Meeting in London, and cherish with you a deep interest in the preservation of the doctrine and fellowship of the primitive church, they desire that the following answer may be sent to your letter:—

The members of this Conference belong to what are called the Regular Baptists of the United States of America, and our statistics as published in our Almanack for this year are as follows: Associations, 607; churches, 13,362; ordained ministers, 8,481; licentiates, 1,138; total number of members, 1,109,343. All these churches of Regular Baptists are strict in their terms of communion, holding the principle that Christian baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's-supper; and rejecting the principle that all Christians, as such, whether baptized or unbaptized, are entitled to visible church fellowship, and to communion at the Lord's-table.

You ask, "whether the open communion sentiment is making much headway among the churches in this country?" So far as the Regular Baptists are concerned, we answer, It is making no progress, for "we have no such custom, neither the churches" of Regular Baptists. All of these churches (without a single exception, so far as our information extends) hold fast in faith and practice to the principle, that baptism is pre-requisite to the Lord's-supper, and all other privileges of church communion.

As Robert Hall, and other advocates of open communion, have contended that the practice of Strict Communion was a mighty barrier to the progress of the principles we hold in regard to Christian baptism, we call your attention to the evidence of facts, as presented by Dr. Arnold, in his book entitled, "The Scriptural Terms of admission to the Lord's-supper," published in Boston, in 1860, Pp. 115—117.†

"When Robert Hall died, thirty years ago, (1831), there were more than 100,000 Baptists in England, and less than 400,000 in the United States. The population has increased since then from 13,000,000 to 20,000,000; but the number of Baptists remains about the same. The population of the United States, which was then about the same as that of England, has fully doubled; but the number of Baptists has much more than kept pace with this rapid increase, having risen from less than 400,000 to more than 1,000,000. Thus it appears that in England, where mixed communion has generally prevailed, our numbers have diminished, compared with the population, in the ratio of thirty-three per cent; while in this country, where strict communion has been the rule, our numbers have increased relatively to the population, in the ratio of about fifty per cent. And it ought to be taken into account, moreover, that this increase has taken place in our country under the signal disadvantage that our growth has been derived in great part from immigration and the accession of new territory; and that of the population thus added, a large proportion has been composed of Roman-

* To be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. William Stokes, 71, Robert-street, C. on M., Manchester. Six copies posted for twelve stamps, but smaller numbers will require an extra stamp for postage.

† The above excellent work has been reprinted in England, and is published by Mr. Elliot Stock, price 6d.

ists, and a very small per cent of Baptists; while in England the increase of population has been mainly natural Add to this, that in our country the influence of Baptist principles has greatly modified the views and usages of other denominations, so that immersion is quite extensively practised, and infant baptism quite extensively neglected, by those who are not called Baptists; whereas no such approximation to our views and practice, has taken place in England."

The comparison instituted by Dr. Arnold, based as it is on the evidence of facts, we leave to speak for itself. It should, however, be kept in mind that in contending in this country for the principle that baptism must precede visible church fellowship, we are contending only for that in which all evangelical denominations agree, except the Quakers and Free-will Baptists. Take a few illustrations of this fact. In a tract published by the "Congregational Board of Publication," entitled, "Scriptural Platform of Church Government;" when discussing "the materials of which a church of Christ is formed," they say (page 2), "As to the gospel church, it is plain that it was composed of none but visible saints. No other but baptized persons were admitted to communion; and no adult persons, but such as professed repentance and faith, were admitted to baptism, which shews that they were visible saints."

In a work on baptism and communion, written by Dr. Hibbard, of the "Methodist Episcopal Church," published by the Methodist Book Concern, as one of their standard denominational works, and recommended by the General Conference, as a text-book for their theological seminaries;—Dr. Hibbard, in part 2, p. 174, says, "It is but just to remark that in one principle the Baptist and Pædobaptist churches agree. They both agree in rejecting from communion at the table of the Lord, and in denying the rights of church fellowship to all who have not been baptized. Valid baptism they consider essential to visible church fellowship. This also we hold. The only question that here divides us is, 'What is essential to valid baptism?'"

The American Tract Society of this country, like the Religious Tract Society of Great Britain, "was formed by Christians of various denominations, to publish the great evangelical truths in which they are agreed." The Society states its work to be "the circulation of religious publications calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical Christians. It is thus precluded from publications involving subjects of controversy among evangelical Christians." ("Principles and Facts of the American Tract Society," p. 2.) Its publishing Committee is composed of ministers of the gospel of six different denominations, and every book or tract published by the Society, goes forth to the world with the full endorsement of each and all the members of this Committee. In a tract published by this Society, entitled, "Shall I come to the Lord's-supper?" the duty of the pious inquirer is thus laid down:—"Let him repent and believe, and come to the table of the Lord. All these are alike duties, and to neglect either is to violate a divine command. But they are to be done in the gospel order: Repent and believe, and being baptized, commemorate the dying love of the Redeemer." p. 1, 2. It says again (p. 3), "We have then arrived at the conclusion that all, without exception or limitation, all who repent and believe, and are baptized, and only they, are fit subjects for the Lord's-supper." However, then, we may differ from these evangelical Christians on the question—"What is essential to Christian baptism?" in the principle that baptism is an indispensable pre-requisite to admission to the Lord's-supper, we all agree.

In regard to other bodies in the United States, that practise immersion, but do not belong to the body called "Regular Baptists," we are not prepared to give you exact and full information. The Anti-Mission Baptists have about 180 Associations, 1,800 churches, 850 Ordained Ministers, and a membership of about 60,000. These churches adhere closely to the practice of Strict Communion. The Free-will Baptists have 142 Associations, 1,285 Churches, 1,033 Ordained Ministers, 186 Licentiates, and 58,055 members. They practise Open Communion. The Seventh Day Baptists have 4 Associations, 66 Churches, 77 Ordained Ministers, 4 Licentiates, and 6,686 Members. As a denomination they practise Strict Communion. The Disciples or Reformers, or Campbellites as they are sometimes called, (after Alexander Campbell,

who has been specially prominent in gathering them together), have about 2,000 Churches 2,000 Ministers, and about 350,000 Members. A few churches of this body, we believe, practise Open Communion, but as a denomination, they practise Strict Communion. In Vol. VI. of the "Christian Baptist," published in 1828, on page 528 of revised edition of 1835, Alexander Campbell says,—"I object to making it a rule, in any case, to receive unimmersed persons to church ordinances: 1st. Because it is nowhere commanded. 2nd. Because it is nowhere precedented in the New Testament. 3rd. Because it necessarily corrupts the simplicity and uniformity of the whole genius of the New Institution. 4th. Because it not only deranges the order of the kingdom, but makes void one of the most important institutions ever given to man. It necessarily makes immersion of non-effect. For with what consistency or propriety can a congregation hold up to the world, either the authority or utility of an institution which they are in the habit of making as little of as any human opinion. 5th. Because it is making a canon to dispense with a divine institution of momentous import; they who do so assume the very same *dispensing power*, which issued in that tremendous apostacy which we and all Christians are praying and labouring to destroy. If a Christian community puts into its magna charta covenant, or constitution, an assumption to dispense with an institution of the Great King, who can tell where this power of granting license to itself may terminate?" In a Union Meeting, held at Lexington, Kentucky, April, 1841, Alexander Campbell is reported to have said, "That a person not immersed has no right to a seat at the Lord's-table: still, he said, if such a person should come to the table, he would say to him, 'I do not know whether your error is of the head or of the heart, and if you will yourself take the responsibility, I shall not push you from the table.'" (Banner and Pioneer, Louisville, Kentucky, April, 1841.)

When open communion is practised in that body, it is upon similar grounds. Those who are not baptized are not invited to the Lord's-supper; but uninvited, those who have not received Christian baptism, take a place at the Lord's-supper on their own responsibility.

The Six Principle Baptists have 18 Churches, 16 Ordained Ministers, and a membership of about 3,000. They practise Strict Communion. The Winebrennerians, or Church of God, are Baptists of the Arminian creed, and hold to Open communion. Their form of church government is much like that of the Presbyterians. They have 275 churches, 132 Ordained Ministers, and a membership of about 14,000. The Tunkers have 150 churches, 150 Ordained Ministers, and 8,200 members. They hold to general redemption, but are Baptists in their church government and discipline, and practise Strict Communion.

In the account here given of Regular Baptists in the United States, we have given you, as nearly as we could, the grand total, but there is no reason to doubt that the number of those who hold the views of our body greatly exceeds the number we have given; for there are many churches holding our views in different parts of our country, who are not connected with any Association, and whose statistics, therefore, are not reported. And Regular Baptists not only hold that Christian Baptism is pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's-supper; but they refuse to commune with baptized members of unbaptized churches, and with all others who countenance unscriptural terms of admission to the Lord's-supper, and restrict communion to such as are in good standing in churches maintaining the gospel order.

You speak in your letter as if you supposed that your brethren here were accustomed to call themselves "*Close* Communion Baptists," rather than "*Strict* Communion Baptists." In this you are mistaken. We much prefer the word "*Strict*" to that of "*Close*."

Our Conference have appointed the following brethren, a Committee with whom we invite you to hold correspondence, in accordance with your request, on subjects of mutual interest. Rev. A. D. Gillette, D. D., Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, New York (Post Office Address, 37, West 23rd-street, New York); —Rev. E. T. Hiscox, D. D., Pastor of the Stanton-street Baptist Church, New York (P. O. Address, 217, Christie-street, New York);—Rev. Samuel Baker, D. D., Pastor of First Baptist Church,

Williamsburg (P. O. Address, 18, Fifth-street, Williamsburg, New York);—Rev. Rufus Babcock, D. D., Pastor of Baptist Church, Patterson, New Jersey (P. O. Address, Patterson, New Jersey). To any or all of these brethren, you can address any communication you may wish to make to the Baptists of this country, and they will make such a disposition of your communication as may seem to them best. We append a list of Pastors of Baptist Churches in New York City and vicinity, most of whom are members of our Conference, and a large portion of whom were present, and voted unanimously for the adoption of this letter.

In behalf of the Conference,
SAMUEL BAKER, *Moderator, pro. tem.*
ROBERT LOWRY, *Stated Clerk.*

New York.

First Church.—T. D. Anderson, Pastor.
Tabernacle.—Edward Lathrop, ditto.
Amity-street.—W. R. Williams, ditto.
South, 25th street.—A. H. Burlingham, do.
Cannon-street.—W. H. Pendleton, ditto.
Mariner's.—I. R. Steward, ditto
Stanton-street.—E. T. Hiscox, ditto.
Laight-street.—I. S. Kallock, ditto.
Sixth-street.—C. C. Norton, ditto.
Calvary.—A. D. Gillette, ditto.
First Harlem.—F. Remington, ditto.
First German.—John Eschman, ditto.
Madison Avenue.—H. G. Weston, ditto.
Berean.—J. Dowling, ditto.
Macdougal-street.—D. Dunbar, ditto.
Sixteenth-street.—W. S. Mikels, ditto.
Mount Olivet.—James L. Hodge, ditto.
Pilgrim.—G. A. Peltz, ditto.
Bethany.—
Bethesda.—S. J. Knapp, ditto.
Abyssinian.—William Spellman, ditto.
Zion.—J. T. Raymond, Pastor.
Welch.—
Bloomingdale.—I. Wescott, ditto.
Yorkville.—
Fifth Avenue.—T. Armitage, ditto.
Bethlehem.—C. Geyer, ditto.
North.—H. Osgood, ditto.
Emanuel.—J. W. Daniels, ditto.
Ebenezer.—J. H. Goble, ditto.
Antioch.—J. Q. Adams, ditto.
Gethsemane.—

Brooklyn.

First.—D. J. Yerkes, pastor.
Pierrepont-street, J. S. Holme, ditto.
Strong-place.—E. E. L. Taylor, ditto.
Concord-street, Sampson White, ditto.
Washington Avenue.—
Hanson-place.—Robert Lowry, ditto.
Greenwood.—E. H. Page, ditto.
Central.—J. W. Sarles, ditto.
Tabernacle.—T. Edwin Brown, ditto.
East Brooklyn, H. Hutchins, Pastor.
Athenæum Baptist Congregation.—Matthew Hale Smith, ditto.

Williamsburgh.

First.—S. Baker, Pastor.
Second.—J. N. Tollman, ditto.
Third.—
South.—E. W. Bliss, ditto.
German.—
Green Point.—W. Reid, Pastor.
Bushwick Avenue.—

Jersey City.

Union.—W. H. Parmly, Pastor.
Bethesda.—G. F. Post, ditto.

Hoboken.

Hoboken.—A. Harris, Pastor.

SAXONY.

Extracts from Mr. Geissler's Report for January and February.

AFTER the lapse of two months, I again furnish you with a report of our proceedings, and I desire to thank God for having granted me hitherto perfect health and necessary strength to do his work. I have been engaged, during this period, in the following duties:—

1. *Preaching* the word. This has been my chief employment, proclaiming Christ, who is *the* Word; and indeed it is most needful in this crooked and perverse generation, to the ingathering of those whom he has ordained unto eternal life. Certainly the large national churches are greatly mistaken, in making the preaching of the word a minor affair, and giving greater importance to ceremonies. Christ and his apostles teach us otherwise by their example. I have spent the best and most of my time in testifying the gospel of the grace of God, and in preparation for it. It has been my chief concern.

During the last two months, I preached thirty-eight times. I have to preach as if it were for the last time, having not only a large audience, but also a very rough and wicked sort of people—open enemies of Christ, who will either laugh or gnash their teeth at our gospel. Often I feel, after the meeting, like one who had to fight with wild beasts at Ephesus. This cannot be expected otherwise, since

we even go into the very temples of Satan (the dancing-halls) to lift up the banner of the cross on the special ground of the enemy. But in these places I have the opportunity of speaking to hundreds and thousands of persons. A few weeks ago, for instance, I was in a town called Düben, where formerly the magistrate would on no account permit a meeting; but at last we succeeded, and the largest hall of the town, the shooting-house, was offered me, which then was crammed to excess before the appointed hour. There were about two thousand persons, who listened most attentively to the free, full, and finished salvation proclaimed by Christ. The Lord helping me, I shall soon be there again, and I know that the thronging will be greater still. May the Lord bless his truth to that people.

2. Teaching a *Sunday-school*, which is quite a new institution here, and is held every Lord's-day, between one and three o'clock. It has continued to be well attended by about fifty children, a number of whom take a visible pleasure in it, learn the lessons (passages) very well, and emulate each other in their attention and answers. The subject under consideration at present is "The Life of Christ." I cannot but cherish much hope of fruit from this soil, and pray that the children's Friend may give the increase.

3. *Book-selling* is another branch of my engagements, though I am not exactly a bookseller. In autumn last, I supplied myself with a considerable number of Bibles, Testaments, hymn-books, and various good Christian publications, all of which I have now nearly sold. In doing this, I am continually acting against the laws of this country, and exposing myself to their judgment; but if by this means souls can be saved, I will with pleasure endure the penalty. In the same time I have sent abroad several thousands of little preachers in the form of *tracts* distributed. Some of them have been made light of; some, alas! have been ill-used; while others have found some attention and a happy reception. They were all sound theologians, and have spoken the plain truth, and that without fear of man.

In connection with these efforts I might mention a *circulating library*, which I have carried on, and which has been made use of, so that there are very few books left. Thus the truth is spread, and I am sure that it cannot but prove itself efficacious.

4. *Bible-classes*. Such have often been the means of bringing sinners to Christ. It was in a Bible-class, about thirteen years ago, that I was first convinced of my lost state, whilst the minister, in quite a familiar manner, explained the ten commandments. There was at that time no noisy thunder, as there is sometimes in our preaching, but there was the lightning—that lightning which does not kill (for dead I was before), but which only could quicken me. I have now, with God's help, held a Bible-class each Sabbath evening, after the regular services, and it has been well attended by the people, and accompanied by the Lord's blessing.

5. *Visits* likewise have required part of my time, and, on the whole, a considerable portion of it is usually taken up with such; but it must needs be so. Very often we think the time spent in visiting lost, but it would even be a good thing if more time were spent in visiting round about in the large hospital of this world, filled with the sick and dying, both physically and spiritually. I always cherish the good intention of paying more diligence to visiting, for it always proves a *mutual* blessing, and sometimes a good preparation for the pulpit.

6. *Studies* and literary labours must necessarily be attended to. My college studies were indeed not all I needed, but only the commencement; for, notwithstanding these, I should long since have run dry and become bankrupt, if I did not go on. It is a pity that usually so little time is now left for studying, when it is so necessary,—whilst the Bible is so full a book, and all the learned doctors and divines round about on the bookshelves wish and wait to get a hearing. From this comes another evil, namely, that, instead of learning and digesting the books that exist already, we are so very apt to make new ones. However, occasionally there is a necessity for it; and, moved by that, I have written lately a pamphlet on "The Creation," and finished a tract which I had formerly written on "Confirmation." I only want the money for printing them, and both are necessary here. I further translated from the English some anecdotes on procrastination, &c., for German publications.

In addition to these labours, much time is also employed in correspondence. This, however, cannot be avoided.

Thus I have shown you my chief labours, and praying that the Lord may abundantly bless them, I remain yours truly,

MORITZ GEISSLER.

Halle, March 6, 1863.

BAPTIST EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

Minutes of Business Meeting, Wednesday Afternoon, April 22, 1863.

W. SHAW, ESQ., in the chair.

Brother PELLS gave out a hymn, and Brother WALL offered prayer; when the SECRETARY read a Report of last year's proceedings, and the Cash Statement, which, on the whole, presented an encouraging aspect.

The following Resolutions were severally adopted:—

RES. I.—Moved by Brother STOCK, seconded by Brother TAYLOR:—

"That the Report now read be adopted and printed; and that the following gentlemen be the Officers and Committee for the year ensuing."

RES. II.—Moved by Brother CRUMPTON, seconded by Brother PARKER:—

"That this Meeting desires to record its continued confidence in the plan pursued by the Baptist Evangelical Society, in educating young men for the ministry; and to express its hope that the churches will look out for suitable candidates whom they may recommend for a course of educational training; and that the Committee will be furnished with sufficient funds to receive them."

RES. III.—Moved by Brother HOWE, seconded by Brother ANDERSON:—

"That the Missionary operations of Brethren Förster and Geissler on the Continent of Europe, claim the continued sympathy and support of the Churches; and that their success demands unfeigned acknowledgments to Almighty God, for his great goodness in aiding and blessing their labours."

RES. IV.—Moved by Brother WILKIN, seconded by Brother PILLOW:—

"That this Meeting is pleased to know that arrangements have been made by which there is, at length, a prospect of the *Primitive Church Magazine* (so important to the interests of the Strict Baptist cause) becoming self-supporting; and regretting to find there is so large a sum due to the Printer, now determines to open a subscription list with a view to its entire payment."

RES. V.—Moved by Brother BOX, seconded by Brother PARKER:—

"That Brethren Alderson, Cracknell, Gast, and W. Norton, be requested to act as the Library Committee for the ensuing year, with power to make any arrangements which they think likely to promote the ends for which the Library has been founded, and that Brother Norton be requested to act as Librarian."

RES. VI.—Moved by Brother WATTS, seconded by Brother CRACKNELL:—

"That this Meeting desires to acknowledge its deep sense of obligation both to the Editor of the Magazine and to the Treasurer of the Society, for the deep interest they have taken in the Society, and the many ways in which they have personally promoted its welfare."

RES. VII.—Moved by Brother HOWE, seconded by Brother ALDERSON:—

"That the thanks of this Meeting be presented to the Secretaries, for their continued devotedness to the interests of the Society."

RES. VIII.—Moved by Brother STOCK, seconded by Brother FRITH:—

"That acknowledgments are due, and be hereby tendered, to the Pastor and Deacons of Soho Chapel, for permission to hold the present Meeting in their place of worship."

The balance of the old debt was reported as about £120; this, the Meeting determined should, if possible, be cleared off within a few months; and twelve or thirteen brethren present put down their names for a contribution of £5 5s., each dependent on others making up the residue of debt. Brethren, will *you* help us?

J. WOODARD,
J. C. WOOLLACOTT, } *Secretaries.*

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting of the Society was held at Meard's-court, Soho, on Thursday evening, April 23: Mr. J. Smith, in the chair.

After singing and prayer, offered by Mr. JOHN HOWE, of Waterbarn,

The CHAIRMAN introduced the business of the evening by a very appropriate and earnest address. In the course of his speech he observed,—"I have for many years past taken a deep interest in this Society, and still think it is the only society which, in its principles and constitution, fairly represents the Strict Baptists; because, while it unflinchingly maintains all the great doctrines of grace, and the principle of apostolic communion, it at the same time combines many who differ on some minor points. Objections have been raised against this Society because of the shades of difference of opinion which have existed amongst those who have taken a more prominent part in the management of its affairs. To my mind, however, this is one of the reasons which especially commend it to more general sympathy and support; and while we much regret that the Society is, comparatively speaking, so little known, and not more generally sustained, yet we cannot but 'thank God and take courage.' Comparing the last with former years, and finding that the debt has been considerably reduced, and the income increased, we may rejoice that the Society is in a more prosperous condition than formerly."

One of the Secretaries having read an abstract of the Report, and the Treasurer's Account, the Chairman called upon MR. D. CRUMPTON, of Salendine Nook, to move the first resolution:—

"That this meeting desires to record its continued confidence in the plan pursued by the Baptist Evangelical Society in educating young men for the ministry, and to express its hope that the churches will look out for suitable candidates whom they may recommend for a course of educational training: and that the committee will be furnished with sufficient funds to receive them."

In his remarks, the speaker took occasion to advert to the Ramsgate Chapel case, and the meeting of rejoicing which had recently been held in connection with the spoil, and in the name of the Strict Baptists generally, protested against the argument that "liberty of conscience" was concerned in the right interpretation of a trust-deed, or in an inquiry as to the real objects for which the chapel was erected. However we may regret these legalized acts of injustice, let not any of these things move us. There may be a diversity of opinion on the educational question; but no one would say that any minister has ever succeeded through ignorance. On the principle of communion, our colleges profess neutrality, and take great credit to themselves for their silence. If, however, strict communion be true and scriptural, why not teach and defend it; if false, why not openly deny and denounce it.

The resolution was seconded by MR. J. S. ANDERSON, who stated the great disadvantages under which he laboured for want of such educational training as this Society affords to young men seeking its aid. In closing his address, he observed: "Intelligence is power, and will always carry its influence with it. I believe the plan adopted by this Society with regard to the education of young men is more in harmony with Scripture than any other plan with which I am acquainted."

The second resolution, moved by MR. E. PARKER, of Farsley, was as follows:—

"That the Missionary operations of brethren Förster and Geissler, on the continent of Europe, claim the continued sympathy and support of the churches, and that their success demands unfeigned acknowledgement to Almighty God for his great goodness in aiding and blessing their labours."

MR. PARKER said: "The continent of Europe is certainly one of the most interesting and important fields of labour. Those nations are not only near to us, but also nearly related to us. Our missionaries labouring there are evidently good and able men, whom God has raised up for special purposes. And the principles of this Society are the very principles required on the continent in opposition to the leading errors maintained there in connection with the extremes of Rationalism and Popery."

The resolution was seconded by MR. WATTS, who observed: "I should like this Society also to afford facilities to young men to educate themselves, or be educated at home, under the immediate care of their own pastors. When I read of Geissler, I was much interested; but when I saw and heard him, that interest was intensified. Our missionaries are evidently not ashamed of the great truths of the gospel, and are men of strong faith in the living God."

The third resolution, moved by MR. J. STOCK, of Devonport, was:—

"That the thanks of this meeting be presented to MR. J. SMITH, for presiding on this occasion; and also to the pastor and deacons at Salem Chapel, for the use of the same."

MR. STOCK, at some length, confirmed the remarks of Mr. Anderson, and further illustrated the necessity of a good sound scriptural education for ministers by the relation of two appropriate anecdotes.

The resolution was seconded by DR. MULES.

After singing the Doxology, MR. P. DICKERSON closed the meeting by prayer.

BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

THE Twenty-second Annual Meeting of the Baptist Tract Society was held on Wednesday evening, April 29, at Kingsgate-street Chapel, Holborn. A number of ministers and friends of the Society took tea in the vestry at five o'clock. The Public Meeting was held at half-past six o'clock. MR. D. WASSELL, of Bath, presided.

After singing, and prayer by Mr. W. FRITH,

The CHAIRMAN observed,—"This Society is so simple that it has no history except in the records of its success. This Society, however, has principles if it has no special history, and its objects are well defined. It has to do with those who do not know the gospel, and with those who oppose it, and lastly with those who pervert it. The great element of weakness in the pulpit, the press, and in the chair of theology, is the lack of dogmatic teaching. In the present day, he is the only wise man who doubts; and the more he doubts the more philosophical he is supposed to be. This is the age of doubt; when, however, we meet with the spirit of the age let us frown upon it, and rebuke it in the name of the Lord.

The SECRETARY then read the Report, and the Treasurer explained at some length the state of the finances.

The first resolution was moved by MR. N. THOMAS, of Cardiff:—

"That the Report, an abstract of which has been read, be adopted and printed; and the brethren whose names have been read be the officers and committee for the ensuing year."

MR. THOMAS said,—"This Society, on the face of it, bears a denominational, and to some extent, exclusive character. On the subject of baptism we stand alone, and are opposed more or less by all other denominations. We have, therefore, a great duty to perform. Many speak of the Lord's-supper as if it was all-important, and baptism of no importance—a matter of indifference. And the fruit of open communion is seen in the fact that thousands have been baptized, but, forsaking their own denomination, are entirely lost to their own denomination. Assist this society by your contributions and prayers—distribute its tracts as widely as possible, and while the day of life lasts, let us do all the good we can to those around.

The resolution was seconded by MR. J. TEALL, of Woolwich. In the course of his address, Mr. Teall observed:—"I like to be identified with this Society, because one of my oldest friends, who took the deepest interest in my welfare, was one of the contributors to this Society as a writer—I mean the late Mr. Smith, of Cheltenham. I also like the title of this Society. Baptism or immersion is either right or wrong—if right, let us never be ashamed of it.

The second resolution, moved by MR. W. K. RYCROFT, of the Bahamas, was as follows:—

"That this Meeting mourns over the strenuous efforts now being made against the truth of God, both within and without the professing church; and would, therefore, call upon their brethren throughout the world to aid the Baptist Tract Society in its efforts to maintain the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel as once delivered to the saints."

MR. RYCROFT observed,—"It is a mournful resolution: we grieve over error in the world, but more especially in the church. Why should we ever apologise for our name, Baptists, since it is scriptural, hallowed, and most ancient? It is almost universally admitted that we are right; let us not ourselves be ashamed of being right, or letting it be known what we are. I have myself received a grant of tracts from the Committee, and intend to distribute them in the Bahamas Islands and in San Domingo.

The resolution was seconded by MR. E. PARKER, of Farsley. Opposition to the truth of God is by no means peculiar to this age; but the aspect of that opposition is peculiar. Surprise has been expressed at the mistakes and errors of great men. Instead of seeking Divine illumination, they lean to, and trust in, their own understanding. The best remedy against all error is to spread the truth as extensively as possible.

It was moved by MR. G. WYARD, and seconded by MR. W. NORTON, that the hearty thanks of this meeting be presented to Mr. D. Wassell for his kindness in presiding on that occasion.

JOSEPH IVIMEY, AND SLAVERY.

THERE was another excellent, though somewhat eccentric auxiliary of the Agency Committee, the Rev. J. Ivimey. He was a dissenting minister. I forget to which denomination he belonged. He was aged, but decidedly one of the young England abolitionists: he supported the agency operations "through thick and thin;" or, to use one of your national expressions, a little more emphatic, and equally vulgar, he "went the whole hog." He always lent his pulpit to sermons or lectures on the subject, for it was immaterial to him what might be the form, so long as information was conveyed. On one of these occasions, he placed me in the most embarrassing position in which I ever found myself. I was returning home late, and passing near his chapel, when my eye was caught by a bill on the wall, that a lecture on slavery was to be delivered, the same evening, in Eagle-street. As the lecturer's name was unknown to me, I felt curious to hear how he would acquit himself, and proceeded to Ivimey's chapel. I arrived in the middle of it, and waited till the end. The congregation, which was very large, then began to disperse, and seeing Ivimey at the foot of the pulpit stairs, I approached him, intending to ask him for an introduction to the lecturer. No sooner, however, did he see me, than he rushed up to the pulpit and shouted to the congregation in a tone which would have startled a bishop, "Stop, stop, come back to your seats! here is a gentleman here who will tell us all about it;" and without another word he seized me by the collar, and hauled me up into his pulpit, with no better resource than my own assurance and a well-worn velvet cushion! There was no remedy for it, so I thumped the cushion well for ten minutes and came down again, when Ivimey took my place, and bestowed a second blessing on his flock, with an extra one on me for dusting his cushion! This anecdote may show you the homely but earnest character of the men who had now become the working bees. They gathered more honey, however, than more illustrious men.—*George Stephen.*

AMERICAN SLAVERY.

THE Duke of Argyll spoke recently at a meeting of the National Bible Society of Scotland. Remarking on the principles which guided that Society, the issue of the Bible without note or comment, he was led to speak of a case in which a body of clergymen had lately been putting a peculiar interpretation on the Bible. He alluded to the recent meeting of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in the Confederate States:—"This great assembly of an important Church goes on to declare, not that negro slavery is an evil of which it is difficult to get rid—for in that I could heartily sympathise with them—but that negro slavery is a system on which they are to plant their national life. Nor is that all. They go on to declare that the opinion which seeks for an ultimate abolition of slavery is not only a hateful opinion, but an infidel opinion."—How awfully true it is that "evil communications corrupt good manners." Here are the professed servants of Him who came to "proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," imputing to infidelity itself the best aspirations for human freedom. If such men are right, then Clarkson, Wilberforce, Knibb, &c., were wrong; nay the whole world of free-born minds, have been wrong. Shades of the old Puritans, who, fleeing from bondage yourselves, first colonized the wilds of America, where are ye? *How is the fine gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!*

FRANCE.

THE FRENCH AND THE BIBLE.

"NEVER forget the great difference there is between the people of France

and the people of England. In this country, youthful education, which always leaves indestructible traces in the human mind, is not, as with you, placed under the influence of the Bible. The Bible, to our great misfortune, is not the book of the country—the book which is read and re-read by successive generations—the book around which families delight to group, and which is like some central point to which everything converges. It is not the Bible which is placed in the hands of the child or of the youth. No, it is the Roman Catholic Catechism, which cuts up the Bible into fragments, and which overlays it with a multitude of false interpretations and absurd traditions. Instead of the waters of eternal life, which gush forth from the Bible, reaching the minds of our people in all their freshness, purity, and rich abundance, like some noble river, threatening from its very source, at every instant, to overflow its banks, we have but some scanty streamlets, impeded by the stones and the sand, which in their course have been intermixed with their waters. And this has reference not only to the labouring classes, but to the classes which lay claim to a higher degree of cultivation. A great number of our most distinguished men have never read the Sacred Scriptures. With everything else they are fully conversant: they know the masterpieces of the national literature, and even those of the literature of foreign countries; and, notwithstanding this, the thought seems never to have entered their minds of taking up the Gospel, and of reading it, from its commencement to its close. They have always regarded it as a book belonging to the church, as some missal which might be useful enough to those who attended mass; and they speak of it at haphazard, without knowing anything whatever about it. This deplorable ignorance in days gone by engendered, and in fact still engenders in many of our isolated provinces, a species of senseless superstition; but in the populous centres of our large towns, it infallibly paves the way for infidelity. The cultivation of the mind is being, day by day, increasingly developed; knowledge and new ideas are being most actively propagated; the prodigies accomplished by science and industry are patent to the eyes of every one. On the other hand, there is but a very imperfect, superficial acquaintance with religion; its true grandeur is not seen; people only behold the insignificant trifles connected with devotion, and the holy figure of the Saviour is obscured before that of the priest-king, who passes away his time in Rome, sighing over the escape from his tyranny of some thousands of the human race. How can we do otherwise than expect that such miserable views, with respect to religion, will precipitate into the slough of infidelity a generation which is fully enlightened with reference to everything that is not connected with Christianity, and which is intoxicated by the pride of its own powers!"

ELGIN.

The Baptist church here held its half-yearly tea meeting on the evening of April 30. Mr. Macfarlane, pastor, presided. Several attached friends of the congregation were present, and all seemed delighted. Eight believers have been baptized and added to the church during the last six months. The word is faithfully preached, and the Holy Spirit is blessing it. A BAPTIST.

HARLECH.

ORDINATION OF AN ELDER.

On Feb. 27, an additional elder (making five), was ordained by prayer, and the laying on of hands; and in the afternoon and evening preaching, by brethren William Roberts, Robert Jones, and John Jones. The attendance was large, and the occasion proved one of much encouragement.

EBENEZER CHAPEL, CLAPHAM.

THE services held in this chapel, on Easter Tuesday, April 7, proved to be very encouraging. Mr. Bloomfield preached an excellent sermon in the afternoon, on Rom. viii. 9, dwelling somewhat largely on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer, and the purposes for which he dwelt in him. The sermon was listened to with great attention.

A Public Meeting was held in the evening, when J. C. Woollacott, Esq., was called to the chair; who, after prayer had been offered, made a very appropriate speech, expressing the pleasure he felt in being present, especially so, at the

progress which the cause had made since the opening of the chapel, one year and nine months since, for the debt which was originally about £800 had been reduced to about £300. A Sabbath-school had been commenced, and upwards of thirty persons had been added to the church. These things were encouraging, and he hoped the cause would continue to prosper and abound. Addresses were afterwards delivered by Messrs. Anderson, Bloomfield, Chivers, Attwood, and Flack. In the course of the evening, Mr. Hall received another manifestation of his friends' good feeling towards him in the presentation of three excellent Vols.—Adams on Peter; Burroughs, &c. on Hosea; Jenkyn on Jude, and Daillé on Philippians and Colossians, which was feelingly acknowledged by Mr. Hall, who thanked one and all most heartily, and especially thanked Mr. Bloomfield and the other ministers for the valuable aid they had rendered him. A cordial vote of thanks to the chairman terminated the happy meeting. The collections amounted to between £7 and £8.

THE PEER AND THE BAPTISTS.

THE Particular Baptists of Blackheath, being urgently in need of a site for a chapel, applied to the Earl of Dartmouth, to grant them, as lord of the manor, a bit of waste land, or to lease them a plot on his own estate. His lordship replied that there were considerable legal difficulties in the way, and added:—"Above all, there would be an insurmountable objection on my part to afford in any degree encouragement to those unhappy divisions, which, it is to be feared, impede, rather than forward, the progress of true religion both at home and abroad." Mr. Jones, the minister through whom the application was made, very naturally upon this referred his lordship to the dissensions in the establishment, and asked him whether there were any "divisions" that could possibly impede religion at home and abroad like those. His lordship's agent then, on his behalf, distinctly declined to grant land for a building for public worship "conducted on any other principles than those of the Established Church, of which his lordship is an attached member;" and he cannot imagine why his lordship should be accused of illiberality "in simply claiming the privilege to exercise the same liberty of conscience in declining to support any sect of dissenters, that such dissenters themselves exercise in declining to conform to and support the Established Church."—*Patriot.*

CHURCH OF ENGLAND BAPTISM BY IMMERSION.

THE ceremony of baptism by immersion took place lately in Trinity Church, Marylebone. Immediately after the termination of the usual morning service, the young lady who was to be baptized, accompanied by her friends and sponsors, proceeded to take her place near a large bath specially constructed for the occasion, and placed immediately in front of the communion table. The rector, Rev. W. Cadman, read the baptismal service, and the candidate then underwent immersion in the cold water with much firmness, after which she retired to change her wet clothes. During her absence, the congregation engaged in prayer on her behalf, and the remaining portion of the service was read on her return. It is stated that the young lady was previously a member of the congregation.

NORTHERN BRANCH OF THE BAPTIST EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.*

THE Annual Meetings, which were held on Wednesday, April 8, 1863, in Pleasant-street Chapel, Haslingden, commenced by a public service in the morning, when Mr. Parker, of Farsley, preached a sound, evangelical sermon from 1 Cor. ii. 7: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery," &c. A collection for the Society was made at the close. In the afternoon, a meeting for business was held, when, after Brother Parker had reported the result of his labours in collecting for the Society, and successfully urged its claims on the brethren present, many of whom promptly responded to the appeal,—

A vote of thanks was presented to Brother Stokes for his efficient services as Editor of the *Primitive Church Magazine*, and expressing a hope that he will continue to render his valuable assistance to the Society in this special department.

A sub-committee was reappointed to

* This report is necessarily abridged in consequence of the lateness of its arrival.